

MALBEC 2009



The winemaking

The winter 2009 arrived quite early, at the end of May. It was then a very cold; very dry winter totally rainless and quite long. The spring was warm, with some strong winds. There were hardly any frosts. The summer started as early as the end of October, we skipped half of the spring. Still rainless. The heat and relentless sun kicked in. We had to irrigate quite a few times this year as there was still no signs of rain. It was the hottest and driest spell we had seen in Rio Negro in its recorded history, endless days ranging between 35 and 40 degrees Celsius (95 to 104 F). The nights also remained warm, which is very unusual for our area which normally gets very cold at night. In other words, an extremely unusual year. The grapes formed hard skins and small berries, but with the warm nights, the polyphenols did not ripen as much as we could wish for. In addition, the sugars went quite high for our area. In other words a year of great luminosity and ripeness.

After making wine from our Noemia single vineyard estate for ten years, we have localized the various different "lots" (plots) and have ended up by dividing the 1,5 hectare into 4 "lots". Each one has differences in soil composition and exposure to the natural elements.

We began harvest this year on 2nd and 3rd of April 2009, the first two "lots" from our 1,5 hectare vineyard, both days were favourable on the bio calendar, they were flower days. Then we continued with the third lot on 8th April 2009, a fruit day, another favourable day following the bio calendar. Finally we harvested the fourth lot on 15th April 2009, a fruit day.

All the grapes were picked by hand into 10 Kgs crates, and then transported in a cool truck to the winery. The grapes were then destemmed by hand, berry by berry! Imagine, that in one day with twelve people destemming by hand, we manage to turn out what a machine can do in only 10 minutes! The grapes are fermented in small 2,500 litres cement vats, and are cold-soaked for about 10 days. Fermentation then starts up with natural yeasts as the grapes slowly warm up in the vats. We are very proud of our own natural yeast to deal with all the fermentation, as the yeasts really do give Noemia's unique character. The fermentation lasted three weeks, extracting color and tannins with the old fashioned "pigeage" or "plunging" method once or twice a day. This is the most gentle extraction technique in winemaking. At Bodega Noemia, we look for elegance and finesse and avoid over extraction. Once the fermentation was over, the wine was by gravity into a little tank and then with the help of a forklift, we elevated the tank so we could feed the wine by gravity into 100% new French barrels made by the finest coopers in France. The wine proceeded with its indigenous malolactic fermentation for about three months at about 18 degrees Celsius. No batonnage was carried out. The wine then remained in the barrels for eighteen months. We blended the wine on Tuesday 28th December 2010, a root day with waning moon following the biodynamic calendar. Out of 16 barrels, we blended only 11 barrels to reach only 3110 bottles and 100 magnums!

On January 31st 2011, a fruit day with waning moon, the wine was bottled unfined and unfiltered. The vines are a 100% Malbec, pre-pheloxera, Pied-Franco, 79 years old.

Note:

Bodega Noemia and myself are proud members of the exclusive YOUNG LIONS – WINEMAKING LEGENDS OF THE FUTURE led by Serena Sutcliff with only 17 members world wide, we are also the Only South American winery present, please have a look at these sites:

www.geoffgreen.com/young_lions/
www.geoffgreen.com/downloads/young_lions_wine_seminar.zip

The area

The estate is situated in the Rio Negro Valley, which is 620 miles South of Buenos Aires, 280 miles East of the Andes, 310 miles West of the Atlantic and a further 1240 miles from Tierra del Fuego. In other words, it is located in the middle of the desert. The valley's microclimate is under the influence of two rivers deriving from the Andes, the Neuquen and the Limay which form into the Rio Negro, which throws itself into the Atlantic. The Rio Negro valley is an ex glacier which is 310 miles long and 15,5 miles large at 250 yards above sea level. In 1828, the British colonies, having observed the large amounts of water flowing in the river, decided to create hannels which would irrigate the valley thus forming a type of oasis in the middle of the desert.

The climate

Is dry. Maximum 30% humidity and 7 inches of rain/year make the area free of diseases. There is no pollution, meaning that there is a high purity of sunlight (great photosynthesis). There is vast thermal amplitude: in maturation season the temperatures are on average 28 °C at day and 9 °C at night. The four seasons are very precise; mild spring, hot summer, mild autumn and a cold winter.

The vineyard

The vines were planted in 1932. The grapes are 100 % malbec. They are irrigated up to four times a year. A green pruning is carried out in mid January during veraison thus leaving only 30 hl/acre. *All of our eleven hectares of estate vineyards are cultivated with organic and biodynamic techniques and are certified by Argencer & Demeter. On the farm we produce seven out of eight biodynamic preparations (502,503,504,506,507) with our own raw material, exclusively. We also prepare our own horn manure (500) and biodynamic composts.*



The wine

Bodega Noemia 2009 is a 100% Malbec with:

- 14% Alcohol (exactly)
- pH 3,50
- 5,92 g/l of Titratable acidity

Only 3,110 bottles and 100 Magnums were produced.

NB. As the wine is a 100% natural and unfiltered, it may present some harmless deposits in the bottle.

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